



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

An Historical Relation of Ceylon, together with somewhat concerning Severall Remarkable Passages of my Life that hath hapned since my Deliverance out of my Captivity. By ROBERT KNOX. (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons. 1911. Pp. lxxviii, 460.)

AMONG the many descriptions of strange lands published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the *Historical Relation* of Robert Knox occupies an honored place, not only because of the author's unique experience as "a captive for more years than he had lived to the time of his captivity", but also because of the patent truthfulness and hard-headed, prosaic nature of the man, which kept him from improving upon the facts he presented. The accident which cast him away almost solitary on an island known only along its littoral and made him a sort of curiosity to the native king occurred before he was educated enough to know the literary and financial benefit of inventing lies. Before he was twenty he was exhibited about the land and later travelled over it earning his living by handiwork. On escaping he prosaically told his story, partly, as he says, to give himself something to do, partly to relearn the art of writing, and partly for the glory of God. This unvarnished tale soon became the best seller of its day and was translated into French and Dutch, so that soon after "all the bookes were bought up", and as he had given his bond not to reprint the *Relation*, he subsequently added his autobiographical notes. The addition of Knox's autobiography with other notes, based on a find made in the Bodleian Library last year, gives its chief historical value to the present edition, though even without the new material a complete reprint of the *Relation* would have been welcome. The editor suggests the question whether Defoe, who knew Knox, may not have been indebted to the *Relation*, and the new autobiographical matter here preserved in convenient form may be helpful in solving this interesting point. Mr. Ryan, the able editor, has done well to preserve the text practically unchanged. We may see here, apart from the narrative itself, how a youth's education served at that time to instil into him more piety than syntax (spelling was rudimentary). "To part my Father and I"; "a bird sets on a tree"; "the countrey wants her water" are evidently unstudied examples of how one naturally spoke *circa* 1680.

The historian knows this book already, so it will be necessary for the reviewer only to point out that Mr. Ryan has brought out the work well and that what new material is provided is of interest chiefly in telling us more of the inner life of the good Puritan captain, together with some details as to his clothes and other trifles, which he forgot to mention in his "great Booke". One cannot but admire the rough sincerity and common sense of the man whose piety is so well modified by natural sagacity that he can explain the endemic "Sickness of Bencoolen" as due to "a contagious Aire which proceedeth from no other cause but the will of the Almighty Creatour, who tourneth a fruitfull land into Barrennesse for the Wickednesse of them that Dwell tharin", and hav-

ing, so to speak, done his duty by the Almighty, then proceeds to explain the "Concurrant Causes" of the trouble, "as first theire houses are leeke and wet. Secondly the Dyett is nasty and also the dishes . . . and thirdly the rotted rice they eat". He gets into a controversy with Captain Dampire (in the biography) over the relative merits of the "plantine tree" and the "Cocornut", and enumerates fourteen virtues of the latter, not to injure the Captain but "to doe the Cocornut tree Justice". He also recognizes his captors' good qualities, and here also the autobiography adds a touch or two that is not without human interest: "These heathen are very Compationate to indigent people of what nation or Religion soever, and theire Common or usual saying in such a case is (Omma gea Durria) He is a Mothers Child".

Were it not that this book is two centuries old and too well known to review in detail we would remind the reader of the many picturesque details to be found in the *Relation* besides its ethnographic value in giving an intimate account of the products, trade, manners, morals, and political state of Ceylon's interior, at a period when the "city three-square like a triangle" was known to only one white man. The narrator may have had an elastic conscience. He says himself, regarding the business of robbing the Indians, that he would not allow himself 'to wade far into the Equity and Justnesse of such Actions, since my Commission according to human law would beare me out'; but wherever his descriptions can be controlled they shine with truth. Thus he says that the heathen will not kill to eat but have no scruples about eating meat killed by another. He means the Buddhists, and this was their rule in India. He says that they can go through the "Oyl" ordeal and come unscathed from the boiling fluid. So they can, and Knox testifies to what he saw (adding also, "whether it be their innocence or theire Art, I know not"). The remarkable tales he tells of door-sitting are strange to him, but practices in India and China make them plausible. His proverbs of the country also ring true: "He that hath Money to give to his Judge needs not fear"; "If the planets be bad, what can God do against them?" Testimony of this sort based on comparative literature is fairly trustworthy and may add to Knox's reputation for veracity in other matters, which has not been entirely unquestioned. The original plates and paging are reproduced in the present volume.

Acts of the Privy Council, Colonial Series. Volume IV., A. D. 1745-1766. Edited through the direction of the Lord President of the Council by JAMES MUNRO, M.A., Beit Lecturer in Colonial History in the University of Oxford, under the general supervision of Sir ALMERIC W. FITZROY, K. C. V. O., Clerk of the Privy Council. (London: Wyman and Sons. 1911. Pp. xxxii, 876.)

THE fourth volume of the *Acts of the Privy Council, Colonial Series*, carries the extracts of the Privy Council Register from 1745 to 1766